



Plant Chat

A Quarterly Publication from the Bismarck Plant Materials Center
to the NRCS Field Offices in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota

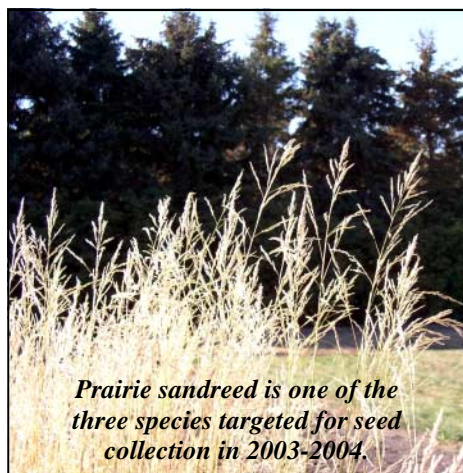
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Seed Collection Extended

A big THANKS to all who collected seed or guided Plant Materials Center staff to seed collection sites this summer and fall! As you may recall, we were on a quest for seed of Indian breadroot (prairie turnip), sand blue-stem, and prairie sandreed. Sand bluestem and prairie sandreed are grasses to be used on sandy, dry sites. No northern source of sand bluestem is currently available. Prairie sandreed releases available for the Northern Plains often encounter rust diseases when moved into eastern North or South Dakota, or Minnesota.



Prairie sandreed is one of the three species targeted for seed collection in 2003-2004.

Prairie turnip is being collected because it can add an additional forb species to planting mixes, and it is culturally significant to Native Americans. Thus, on goes the search for seed to develop new releases. Due to drought in parts of the Dakota's and Minnesota, seed was not abundant and seed quality was often poor for all species this year. The search became quite a challenge. Despite the unfavorable conditions, we have received

several collections from folks in various offices in all three states (SD, MN, ND). However, we are still in need of additional collections to evaluate for developing releases. We are hoping 2004 will be a better seed year, so have extended the collection time. Prairie turnip is ripe in early to mid July. Prairie sandreed and sand blue-stem are ripe beginning in September. Collection envelopes will be available for next year's harvest or any collections you may make this fall. Contact the PMC if you have any questions. The search goes on!!!

Nancy Jensen, Agronomist

Native Plant Summit VII Provides Forum for International Exchange

A diverse audience of more than 175 people listened to speakers from Canada and the United States address various conservation topics ranging from lakescaping to grassland management to ethnobotany. The three-day event, including an all day tour, happened in Fargo, North Dakota, on September 16-18, 2003. More than 25 exhibits and poster papers were available for viewing. Speakers addressed the theme of *Planning Native Landscapes – Both Urban and Rural*. The tour focused on native plant efforts regarding seed production, prairie restoration/fire management, and youth education. The summit concluded with a panel discussion on "Native Plant/Seed Sources: Which is Best?" Approximately 46 NRCS and Conservation District personnel were in attendance. Proceeding abstracts are available for most of the presentations and a copy can be received by contacting me or the PMC. The Bismarck

Plant Materials Center was the host and we would like to express our appreciation to all the speakers, tour guides, planning committee members, donation sponsors, and participants who helped make this a successful summit!

Dwight Tober, Plant Materials Specialist

Release Posters Available

A colorful poster featuring photos and names of the herbaceous and woody releases from the Bismarck Plant Materials Center was recently published. Each NRCS office in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota will be receiving two posters. As they adorn your office wall, I hope they are useful in showcasing species and varieties available for various farm programs. Additional copies of the poster are available at no cost from the Plant Materials Center (ph. 701-250-4330).

Nancy Jensen, Agronomist

Have You Completed Your Field Planting Evaluations?

Field Planting (FP) evaluation forms were distributed to appropriate field offices in mid-August. Generally, the forms are due back in early November. This year, 44 forms were sent to North Dakota, 19 to South Dakota, and 47 to Minnesota. Species being evaluated include gray dogwood, leadplant, slough sedge, black chokeberry, sweetgrass, blue grama, buffalograss, and basin wildrye. Concerning the new entries for this year, initial reports on the gray dogwood sound promising and I have not had any feedback on the slough sedge. Let me know if you have any questions on completing the evaluations.

Dwight Tober, Plant Materials Specialist



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